



Capital Notes

Washington State Council of Farmer Cooperatives * 9103 Chestnut Hill Lane SE * Olympia, WA 98513

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Cooperatives response needed for 1999 survey

Editors Note: USDA is in the process of surveying cooperatives to compile its annual statistical analysis of growth and trends of cooperatives. WSCFC encourages its members to participate in and support the USDA survey.

The annual survey of farmer cooperatives conducted by USDA's Rural Business-Cooperative Services (RBS) is the only source of detailed information on cooperatives and their service to American agriculture. This data source, the only one with a National scope, provides an important view of cooperatives' progress, growth and trends. USDA also provides data on cooperatives' memberships and business volume by State every other year. The 1999 survey includes questions to develop State data. This is important to our State cooperative Council, so we encourage your participation.

Why an annual survey?

Data are collected annually to gauge current cooperative activities, develop trend lines, and have access to needed information for important research, education, and information on cooperatives.

How are the data collected?

The data are collected through the use of questionnaires. Similar questions are asked each year so that important data series can be maintained. Periodically, additional questions are included for conducting special studies of various aspects of farmer cooperatives. The 1999 survey is collecting additional information for a special study of local cooperatives' involvement in providing crop protectants to their members.

Forms are mailed in early September to all cooperatives ending their

business year between January and June. Cooperatives whose business year ends from July through September receive a questionnaire in early December. Those whose business year ends in the last quarter receive questionnaires in early March of the following year. Cooperatives are encouraged to furnish a copy of their annual or audit report along with the completed questionnaire. Data are maintained for use in research, education, technical assistance, and information by RBS staff. Any data used in presentations or publications are combined to maintain the confidentiality of individual cooperatives. Individual report forms are kept strictly confidential.

How are the data used?

Data collected from the annual survey of farmer cooperatives are combined, expanded to represent the total population, and selected data are published in reports such as Rural Cooperatives, Statistical Abstract of the United States, and Agriculture Statistics. Farmer cooperative statistics are used by cooperative leaders, educators, researchers, policymakers and other interested parties in farmer cooperatives. Agency staff frequently use the information for important studies and presentations. Educational materials, from pamphlets to collegiate textbooks, rely heavily on statistics collected by the agency. Many people, including foreign visitors, contact the agency when they want to learn about the structure and operation of U.S. farmer cooperatives.

How can farmer cooperative statistics be acquired?

A copy of the annual statistics report is sent to each cooperative. Additional copies of the report can be ordered from RBS. Information on farmer cooperative statistics can also be obtained on the internet at www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/pub/sr57b.pdf. If you have questions regarding farmer cooperative statistics, please call, e-mail, or write Charles A. Kraenzle at (202) 720-3189. Or charles.kraenzle@usda.gov, or USDA/RBS/Statistics, Stop 3256, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC, 20250-3256.

Administrative changes at WSU

PULLMAN, Wash. – Michael J. Tate has been appointed director of Washington State University Cooperative Extension, and James Carlson, director of the WSU Agricultural Research Center, effective Jan. 15.

James Zuiches, dean of the College of Agriculture and Home Economics, has carried both directors' titles, as well as that of dean, since taking the dean's post in 1995. Tate and Carlson have carried the titles of associate dean and associate director.

"Although I have had the directors' titles, the associate deans have had full responsibility and are providing the leadership for their respective divisions of the college," Zuiches said.

"Leadership of research and extension programs justifies the title of director, so with the approval of President Sam Smith and of USDA we are changing their titles to director."

Both Tate and Carlson retain associate dean titles.

Co-op clips

Agronomy marketing joint venture to be named Agriliance (February 2, 2000) – Land O’Lakes, Inc., Cenex Harvest States Cooperatives and Farmland Industries today announced that Agriliance, LLC will be the name of the agronomy marketing joint venture between three regional cooperatives. The new company name is a combination of the words agriculture and alliance. Agriliance, LLC will maintain marketing and sales offices in St. Paul, MN and Kansas City, MO.

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1999-2000 Officers

The Washington State Council of Farmer Cooperatives is a trade association representing agricultural cooperatives. The council's primary goals are to represent its members before the legislature and agencies of government and to provide cooperative education for its members.

Capital Notes is produced by the Council to inform its members about issues of interest to cooperatives.

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